

Council on Postsecondary Education
September 12, 2013

Rural Access Work Group – Implementation Plan

At its June 2013 meeting, the Council formally accepted the final report of the Rural Access Work Group. The group, which met from October 2012 through May 2013, formulated 19 recommendations focused on six broad areas for improvement: (1) college affordability; (2) college readiness and outreach; (3) education and workforce alignment; (4) partnerships between KCTCS and university regional campuses; (5) adult-friendly degree programs; and (6) high-speed Internet access.

The Council requested that to the extent possible staff integrate the recommendations into the Council's strategic plan structure, drawing on the expertise and work currently being undertaking in the four policy areas: college readiness; student success; research, economic and community development; and efficiency and innovation. The Council also requested that staff report on progress in developing implementation strategies at the Council meeting in September. A draft implementation plan matrix is attached; specific actions will be discussed at the meeting.

Background

The Council formed the work group to explore the causes of perennially low educational attainment in rural pockets of the state. This action was in part a response to a study commissioned by Governor Beshear and conducted by the National Center on Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to determine if the University of Pikeville should become the state's ninth public university. While the NCHEMS report did not ultimately endorse that proposal, it did highlight broader challenges facing the state regarding postsecondary access and success in Kentucky's most economically and educationally distressed rural areas.

The Council charged the Rural Access Work Group with formulating policies, strategies, and initiatives to advance the objectives of the 2011-15 Strategic Agenda for Kentucky Postsecondary and Adult Education aimed at increasing postsecondary access and success in all parts of the state. The work group included a broad array of education, business, and state and local government leaders in Kentucky and was chaired by Council Chair Pam Miller.

To view the full report of the Rural Access Work Group, please visit
<http://www.cpe.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/FA324724-E46C-4E4C-B6F4-EDB8DB748A77/0/RAWGFinalReport61813.pdf>